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HISTORY

OF

*The County Buildings*

OF NORTHAMPTONSHIRE.



THE COUNTY BUILDINGS,  
NORTHAMPTON.









THE COUNTY HALL, NORTHAMPTON.





HISTORY  
OF  
*The County Buildings*  
OF NORTHAMPTONSHIRE.

I.—THE COUNTY GAOL. II.—THE COUNTY HALL.

III.—THE JUDGES' LODGINGS.

AND

COUNTY BRIDEWELLS.

BY

CHRISTOPHER A. MARKHAM.



*List of Curious Tracts written from the County Gaol; the Gaol  
Charities; and Addenda.*

ILLUSTRATIONS AND PLANS.

Northampton :

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*G. F. Parkman fund*

*The impression on the title-page is a fac-simile of the Seal used for many years past on County Documents and Papers. There is no evidence of any other Seal having ever been used in the Office of the Custos Rotulorum of this County.*

TO  
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
JOHN POYNTZ EARL SPENCER, K.G.,  
LORD LIEUTENANT AND CUSTOS ROTULORUM  
OF THE  
COUNTY OF NORTHAMPTON,  
THESE PAGES ARE MOST RESPECTFULLY  
INSCRIBED BY  
THE AUTHOR.





## P R E F A C E .

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THE old County Gaol in Northampton having been recently abolished and partly pulled down, I thought it might be a matter of some interest to local Archæologists, and a small addition to the History of the County of Northampton, to have an account of the building of this Gaol.

To make this account as perfect as possible I have searched the Records of the County and Borough of Northampton. I have also had the benefit of the valuable information Mr. John Taylor was able and willing to give me; I have been much assisted by the Rev. R. Isham, whose knowledge of this County is surpassed by none; and by Mr. W. Shoosmith, Mr. H. Simpson, Mr. A. Percival, Mr. L. J. Deacon, Mr. J. A. Gotch, Mr. J. Howe, Mr. J. F. Noble, Mr. G. Foster, Mr. D. Norman, Mr. C. Botterill, Mr. S. Beattie, and Mr. B. Rust. To each of these gentlemen my thanks are due. From the information thus obtained I have written in the following pages such facts concerning the first construction of this Gaol, its many alterations and additions, as appeared to me to be authentic.

As the History of the Gaol is intimately connected with, that quite beautiful building, the County Hall; and the Judges' Lodgings adjoining, I have added what information I could obtain as to these buildings. I have also written a few words on the County Gaols and Bridewells.

C. A. M.

*Pitsford,*

*August 28th, 1885.*



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THE COUNTY GAOL.

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# THE COUNTY GAOL.

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THE management of Gaols is a question that has long engaged the attention of the Legislator, the Philosopher, and the Philanthropist. Since "the good old times" there has been a great improvement in Gaols; and the following notes of these changes, as far as the same relate to the County of Northampton, may be interesting to many who have never considered the fate of prisoners in the olden times.

The Castle was used as the Common Gaol in those good old times, and it probably continued to be used for this purpose until the commencement of the seventeenth century.

In a very rare Tract, in the Bodleian Library, printed in London in 1612, entitled *The Witches of Northamptonshire*, it is mentioned that "These two witches (Agnes Browne and Joane Vaughan) were apprehended, and brought to Northampton Gaole by Sir William Saunders of Codesbrooke Knight." Helen Jenkinson and Mary Barber were also committed to the Northampton Gaol. The witches "beeing brought from the common gaole at Northampton to Northampton Castle, where the Assises are vsually held, were seuerally arraigned." They were all found

A

guilty, " So without any confession or contrition, like birds of a feather, they all held and hanged together for company, at Abington gallows hard by Northampton."

Norden, writing about the year 1590, mentioned that "neare unto the Towne (of Northampton) theare standeth an auncient Castle Ruynous." From the before mentioned tract and from Norden's statement, it appears to me certain that the County possessed a Common Gaol at this time. Where this Common Gaol was situated I have been unable to ascertain; but it seems probable that it was near the site of the present County Hall. It is not likely that prisoners would be confined in a ruinous castle, although the Assizes might well be held there. In the year 1662 the Castle as well as the wall and gates of the town were demolished.

Notwithstanding this Mr. Hartshorne states, in his *Memorials of Northampton*, that "The castle remained as a Prison until nearly the commencement of the last century, when it fell into private hands."

The following quotations will show the condition of this County Gaol about the middle of the seventeenth century :—

In Besse's *Collection of the Sufferings of the People called Quakers*, I find that in the year 1655 Thomas Stubbs was sent to Prison by a Justice for exhorting the people of Daventry to Repentance; and confined thirteen Weeks.

Next year (1656) Thomas Goodarie was taken preaching in a Meeting at Ould, and by two Justices



sent to Northampton Gaol, where he lay among Felons, in a Place twelve Steps under Ground, for sixteen Weeks; and there were many others imprisoned, who died in the same place.

The following is from *A Brief Account of some of the Late and Present Sufferings of the People called Quakers*. London, 1680:—

“Northton. John Samm of Howend in the Parish of Houghton Conquest in the County of Bedford, a faithful Minister and Labourer in the Lords Work, William Lovel of Hardington, and Joseph Gamage of Buggbrook being with several others assembled in the fear of God, to worship him in Spirit and Truth at Nuskutt the 23d day of 6th moneth, 1663. were apprehended by Warrant from John Willoughby, called Justice, who committed them to the common Gaol, where there were above thirty that lay in the low Gaol, twelve steps below the Ground and in the night they had but little Air, being lockt down betimes, and so kept close until the seventh hour the next Morning; and John Snart the Wicked Gaoler would not suffer their Friends to come at them; with this hard Usage several of the Prisoners fell sick and dyed; the said John Samm dyed the 26th day of the 1st moneth, 1664. William Lovel dyed the 11th day of the 2d moneth, and Joseph Gamage dyed the 2d day of the 2d moneth.”

In a Tract called *A Testimony against Periwigs and Periwig-making, and Playing on Instruments of Musick, &c.*, by John Mulliner, published in 1667, the following appears:—“About this time there were several of this People (Quakers) carried out dead out of the County Gaol, which lay in the Dungeon, FOR

THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS; which I know not, but might be by Reason of the Straitness of the Place as they were confined in, and for want of common Air."

This dungeon was in existence at the end of the last century, when an order was made at Quarter Sessions for it to be repaired.

The following shows something of the internal economy of this Common Gaol:—

In 1674 Ann Foster (who was Arraigned for a Witch) "was by *Mittimus* from the Justice of Peace committed to Northampton Gaol, there to remain till the next Assizes. No sooner was she brought in, but the Keepers of the Gaol caused her to be Chained close to a Post that was in the Gaol."

I may mention that the Gaol and the House of Correction were at the earlier period of our history separate and distinct places and not as they now are practically one. At the time of which I am writing (1660) the gaol was under the jurisdiction of the Sheriff annually appointed by the Crown, but the House of Correction was under the jurisdiction of the Justices of the Peace. In 1660 Sir Richard Rainsford, of Sywell, wrote to Sir Justinian Isham explaining the law of James I. relating to Gaols and Houses of Correction, and saying that "Snart complains that he is short of room in the Gaol, and asks for the rest of the House occupied by Herne for a Bridewell, which office is to be provided for by the County and under Penalty, and I believe the whole house was bought by the County and conveyed to Feoffees for their use; Notwithstanding Snart hath appointed his part for the Gaol, which ought not to be, the care thereof belonging to the Sheriff—not

to the County, and now Snart wants to have the whole in his hands ; the County has to provide for the House of Correction—not for the Gaol.

Yrs., R. Rainsford.”

Gaols of course were formerly the only prisons, and the establishment of them is so ancient that “the memory of man runneth not to the contrary.” As long ago as 1340 an Act was passed by Edward III., imposing the charge of County Gaols upon the Sheriff “as before this time they (the Sheriffs) were wont to have,” and the Statute directed the Sheriffs “to put in such keeper for whom they will answer.” Henry VIII. passed an Act in 1532 “for the making of Gaols within the Realm where none be or where they be weak and feeble.” Northampton was one of the Counties required to provide a Gaol. This Act was continued and confirmed by several later Acts, but Northampton does not seem to have complied with it.

In 1598 a Statute was passed suggesting that Houses of Correction should be built, and authorizing any person to erect them ; and in 1609 the first statute requiring Houses of Correction to be built in every shire was passed. The Justices were to be fined if Houses of Correction were not provided. This Act was continued by another in 1628.

In 1634 the County had acquired a House of Correction, as appears from a recital in a deed dated in 1671, of which an attested copy is preserved amongst the County papers. This commences with a memorandum in Latin to the following effect :—That at General Sessions of the Peace held at Kettering on the 3rd of October 1671 before W<sup>m</sup>. Pargiter Sam Clarke W<sup>m</sup>. Washborne and W<sup>m</sup>. Buckby Serg<sup>t</sup>.-at-Law

Justices of the Peace George Geoffryes mentioned below came in his own person and recognised that writing as his deed (which he had executed on the 7th day of June in the same year) the tenour of which writing continued uninterruptedly in these following words, viz. :—

“This Indenture tripartite made the seaventh day of June in the three and twentieth yeare of the Raigne of o<sup>r</sup> Sovereign Lord Charles the Second by the Grace of God of England Scotland ffrance and Ireland King Defend<sup>r</sup> of the Faith &c anno<sup>que</sup> Dom 1671 Betweene the Right Honeble Christopher Lord Hatton Barron Hatton of Kirby in the County of Northampton Sonne and Heire and sole Administrator of the goodes and chatteles rights and credites of Christopher Lord Hatton late deceased and George Geoffryes of Weldon in the County of Northton Gent of the first part and The Right Honeble John Earle of Exeter James Earle of Northampton Charles Earle of Westmorland Henry Lord O'Bryan Edward Lord Mountigue Sr Richard Rainsford of Dalington in the said county of Northton Kin<sup>t</sup> one of His Majestie's Justices of His Court of King's Bench S<sup>r</sup> Roger Norwich of Brampton by Dingly in the said county of Northton Barr<sup>t</sup> and Sir W<sup>m</sup>. ffarmer of Easton Neston in the said county of Northton Barr<sup>t</sup>. of the second part and Hatton ffarmer of the Towne of Northampton in the County of Northton Gent. and W<sup>m</sup> Goode of Weldon in the said County of Northton Gent of the third part.”

This deed, after stating that two servants of Sir Christopher Hatton, the father of Lord Hatton mentioned above, bought the Bell Inn at Northampton for

£300, and that " Lord Hatton did lay out and spend severall great sumes of money " in repairing the same and erecting new buildings, and that such sum of £300, and also other " many great sumes " had, with the exception of £100, been repaid to His Lordship out of the County Stock ; and that by an Order of Sessions made in the same year (1671) it had been ordered that such £100 should be repaid to Lord Hatton, who should then be required to convey the property purchased by him through his servants in 1634 to certain Trustees to hold the property. In trust in the first place and principally for the purpose of a House of Correction, and then to let such part as was not required for this purpose to the gaoler of the said County at twenty marks per year, to be paid to the Clerk of the Peace for the benefit of the County ; but if the gaoler refused to take the same, the Trustees were to let such residence in the best way they could. Lord Hatton and the survivor of his two servants then conveyed the property to Trustees, who were to hold the same for the benefit of the County upon the trusts mentioned in the Order of the Court of Quarter Sessions.

In this deed it is also expressly stated that the property was then used not only for a House of Correction, but also for a Gaol. At this time the County Hall was not built, and it was not until the year 1676 that an order was made at Sessions that the County Hall should be built on the ground belonging to the Gaol burnt down in the great fire the previous year. This Order of Court therefore defines the site of the old Bell Inn so purchased in 1634 for the use of the County. I believe that the Hatton

family had a residence over the property lying between the old Bell Inn and the George Inn. At the Sessions in 1671 an Order was made for Val. Chadwick to have the Gaol for one year at 20 marks, the sum fixed for the gaoler to pay by the deed of 1671. I may mention that at this time a mark was worth 13s. 4d., although at the time of Henry I. it was only worth 6s. 1d.

The gaoler paid part of this sum out of the fees obtained from the poor felons and debtors and perhaps part of the money was paid by the Sheriff, who was repaid by the Crown when he sent his annual accounts in to the King. In 1669, the first payment of which there is any record, to the keeper of the House of Correction, of £15, was made. That the old Gaol was then burnt down I find confirmed by the County Treasurer's payments as follows:—

1675. To the gaoler upon Sessions Order towards the payment of his rent for his new Gaol . . . . £10 0 0
1676. To the gaoler for his extraordinary charges about securing the prisoners by Sessions Order . . . . £12 0 0

No doubt these extraordinary charges arose in consequence of the fire destroying the old Gaol. From all this it seems clear that previous to the great fire part of the Bell Inn was principally used for the House of Correction, and the residue let for a Gaol at the annual sum of twenty marks, and that the County Hall now stands on the ground where the Gaol stood.

According to the County Treasurer's book of 1677, payments were made to Richard Raynsford, Esq., of £100 and £76, and in 1678 the sums of £70, £54, £59,

and £45, were also paid. These sums I think were paid to Mr. Raynsford for rebuilding the House of Correction at the back of the County Hall. In 1675, 1676, and 1677, no payments were made to the keeper of the House of Correction, but in 1678 several payments were made to him.

In the year 1689 the following Order, which shows that, even two hundred years ago, the Gaol was visited by the Magistrates, was made at the Quarter Sessions :

“ It is desired by this Court That S<sup>r</sup> Thomas Samwell Bar<sup>r</sup>. Salathiehl Lovell Serjeant at Law Richard Raynsford Francis Morgan Hervey Ekins Edward Stratford and Gerard Gore, Esq<sup>res</sup>. and such other of their Mat<sup>ies</sup>. Justices of the Peace in this County as shall think fitt or any three or more of them would take the trouble to inspect the Publicke Gaole and House of Correction for this County and the Prisoners therein and to take notice of their necessities and an account of their allowances, and to make such Ord<sup>r</sup> for the regulating the same as they shall thinke fitt and also to consider of the best way and methodd to settle the same for the future for the due Execucon of Justice and ease of the County. And to make their Report of their opinion and proceedings touching the Premises at the next Quarter Sessions of the Peace to be held for this County.”

But the Justices must have been rather careless in their discharge of this duty, or perhaps their ideas of what was right and proper were very different to our own at the present day. At all events when Howard visited the gaol, nearly a century later, he found the place in a wretched condition, as we shall hereafter see.

The prisoners were maintained by the County, as I find several payments a year to the gaoler for bread distributed to the prisoners, and these payments continued until 1699, in which year it was "ordered that the county pay for noe more bread for ye King's condemned prisoners."

In the Chamberlain's town accounts for the year 1697, I find an entry as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
Paid for irons for Bridewell . . . .	0	2	6

These irons, probably, were for the County Bridewell, as the Borough had no House of Correction at this time, although there was a Common Gaol in Fish Lane.

The following is from *Christ alone our Life. The Great Case of Every Man's Life and Death Determin'd by the Sentence of God. . . . Opened and applied in a Sermon Preach'd in the Sessions-House at Northampton, Sept. 9th. 1690. to some Prisoners the Day before their Execution: and now Published with Enlargements, for the further Benefit and Service of Souls. With a Narrative of the Behaviour of the Prisoners.* By Edward Pierce, M.A. Rector of Cottesbrook in Northamptonshire:—

The sermon is dedicated "To the Honourable Sir James Langham K<sup>t</sup>. and Baronet, My most Honoured Patron. Sir William Langham of Walgrave. John Thornton of Brockhole, Esq; Grace and Eternal Life."

And the Epistle Dedicatory states that:—

"There was then in the Gaol a large Room next the great Parlour, which look'd to the Street, and a Pulpit in it, with a Gallery above Stairs at one end of it, as I



remember, and other Conveniences for the Prisoners and others, (tho' then it was hard for any of the Town to get admittance, except they were Friends, or could make acquaintance in the House) and there was Six Pound *per Annum* paid to a Preacher (for preaching once a Month as I remember) given by Sir *Francis Nicholas* . . . . But since the dreadful Fire, there is a very fair House built, that stands in good Air, open to the Fields on one side, which make a pleasant prospect; well contrived for all Offices and Uses; but there is no Room proper nor fit for preaching. I presume the Salary is paid, but it is more than I know, that there is as much as one Sermon in a year preached for it.

After the fire, the Gaol was removed into a strait house."

In the year 1691, the County purchased the house adjoining the County Hall on the west side, and two other pieces of land in the town, from Christopher Lord Viscount Hatton and William Longueville, who were the representatives of Sir William Haselwood, of Maidwell.

In the Treasurer's accounts for the Western Division of the County, for 1691, I find the following entries:—

	£	s.	d.
1691. Paid Mr. John Horson for y <sup>e</sup>			
use of y <sup>e</sup> R <sup>t</sup> . Hono <sup>ble</sup> . the L <sup>d</sup> Hat-			
ton in p <sup>t</sup> . for y <sup>e</sup> gaole, &c. . .	180	00	00
do. do. . .	20	00	00
Ditto in full for y <sup>e</sup> gaol, &c. .	20	00	00
	<hr/>		
	£220	00	00
	B 2		

The Treasurer for the Eastern Division of the County also paid £200, making a total payment of £420 for the house, a close in S. Giles' Street called Moleshole, and another close.

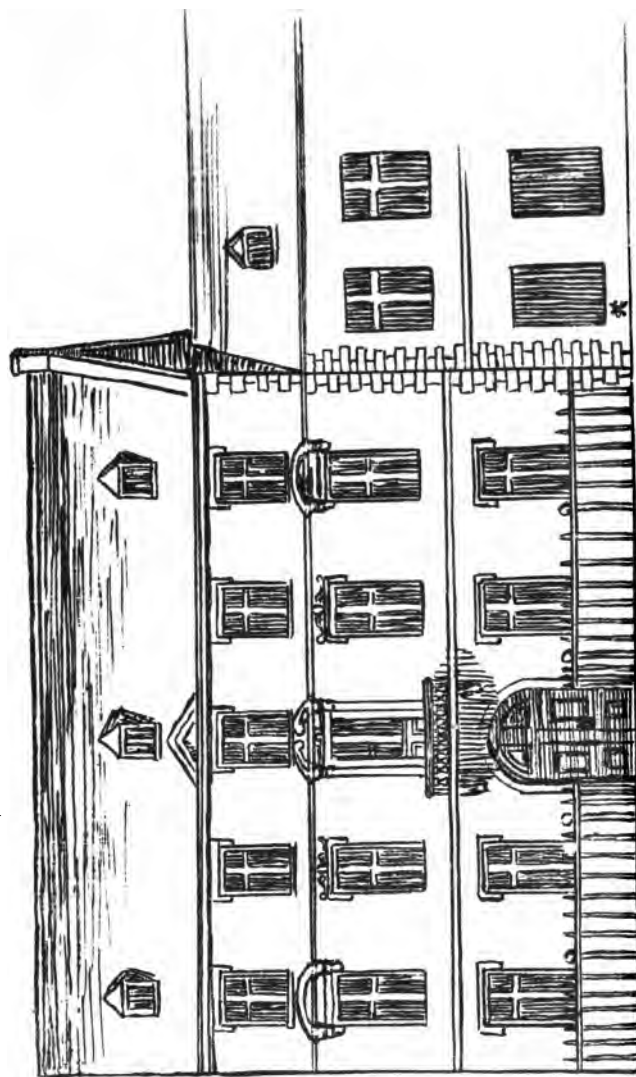
This house was built by Sir W. Haselwood subsequently to the great fire, and at the time of its sale to the County it was leased by Lord Hatton to John Chadwick the gaoler, at £40 a year, for use as a Gaol.

The Record of Quarter Sessions mentions that the Trustees of the property were to pay John King, or his executors, at the end of his term, the sum of £40; or permit him or them to take away a certain building then lately erected by Thomas Chadwick, gentleman, late keeper of their Majesties Gaol, in the yard belonging to the said Gaol, for the lodging of Quakers.

The Gaol adjoined the street where the present County Hall now stands, and I have no doubt some of the Gaol windows opened into the street. In *An Account of the Births, Educations, Lives, and Conversations, of Elinor Shaw and Mary Phillips*, (the two notorious Witches) published in London, 1705, it is mentioned that "One day Mr. Laxon and his Wife coming by the Prison, had the Curiosity to look through the Grates, and seeing of Ellinor Shaw, told her, that now the Devil had left her in the Lurch as he had done the rest of his Servants."

The sketch of the front of the Gaol is from a map published in 1746, by Messrs. Noble and Butlin; this shows the Gaol and the Infirmary—now the Stamford, Spalding, and Boston Bank.

1746.



The County Gaol between the Sessions House and the Infirmary. It has a yard behind it and a pleasant view of the country.



This house and the two pieces of land, were (when the County purchased them) charged with payment of thirty pounds a year to a Hospital at Billing. It appears that "John Freeman, of Great Billing in the county of Northton, Esq., one of the ancestors of Sir W. Haselwood of Maydwell Knight," by his will dated the 25th day of February, 1623, gave one tenement in Great Billing, to be "made fit for the habitacon of foure poore aged Widdowes and one poore aged Man being a Widdower and could reade to say prayer to the said poore Widdowes and to serve God there every day att the Houres of Seaven in the Morneing and five in the afternoone throughout the yeare forever within the same House."

Afterwards "the Lord Gorges and the Lady Katherine his wife grandmother of the said Sir W<sup>m</sup>. Haselwood being minded to Indowe the said House or Hospital soe created and founded as afs<sup>d</sup>. and to Establish a Sallary or sume of Five pounds apiece to be yearely paid by foure quarterly payments to each of the said poore people for their respective Maintenance and Subsistence and twenty shillings yearely to buy each of them a Gowne every yeare. And for the better secureing the payment thereof and for keeping the said House or Hospital in repaire for ever the said Lord Gorges and Lady Katherine his wife Did by good conveyance in the Law grant convey and assure unto Justinian Isham then Esq<sup>r</sup>. and since Barr<sup>t</sup>. decd and several other persons the Inheritance and Fee simple of certain Messuages and Tenem<sup>ts</sup>. in the Towne of Northampton which premisses were burnt downe and consumed by the late Dreadful Fire in Northampton aforesaid." But until about the year 1864, there had been a misapplication of the funds

of the Charity, by paying the sums of money to poor persons residing at Weldon, the seat of Lord Winchilsea. Such poor persons were appointed to receive the charity by the Earls of Winchilsea, the head of which family at that time represented the founder of the Charity. This was then partially remedied by the Court having, before the year 1860, ordered that no payments should be made to any pensioners, to be appointed from the date of such order, except they resided at Billing. As the pensioners died off this order was adhered to, and now they all reside at Billing.

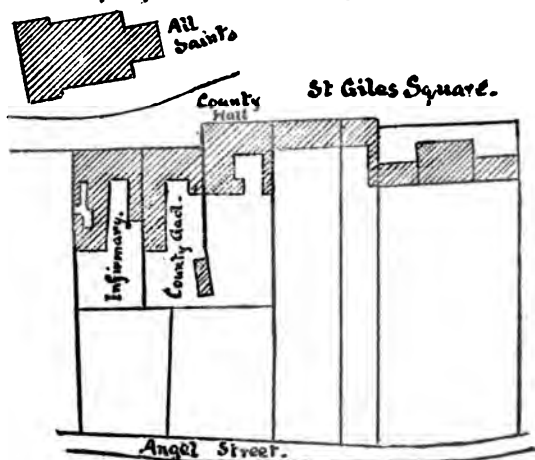
By the Inclosure Act passed in the eighteenth year of the reign of George I., for inclosing the common land in Great Billing, it was recited that the said almshouse and piece of ground adjoining, containing about one rood, were near to the mansion of Lord John Cavendish, who was then owner of Great Billing, and it would be a convenience to have the said almshouse taken down, and the ground on which the same stood incorporated with his other lands. It was enacted that as soon as the said Lord John Cavendish should settle another house in the village for a hospital, the old hospital should belong to him. Lord John Cavendish therefore, in 1780, conveyed another house to the Clerk of the Peace, to be used as a hospital. This was approved of by the Justices.

In the year 1868 the County made application to the Charity Commissioners, who discharged the trust on the County investing such a sum in consols, that would produce the £30 for the annual payments, that would keep the Hospital at Billing in good repair, and that would rebuild the Hospital when it decayed,

Having now disposed of the Billing Hospital in connection with the County, I will return to the County Gaol.

The plan below is from the excellent map of the Town mentioned before.

**Plan of County Property**  
*Map published in 1746*



In the year 1755 there were two fine walnut trees in the Upper Garden of the Gaol, but they were cut down by Order of the Justices in that year.

The deed by which William Zouth Lucas Ward of Guilsborough, the High Sheriff in 1785, appointed "John Scofield gentleman" as his gaoler is interesting; it seems to provide for all possible contingencies, thus "John Scofield and his deputies should at all times convey to the place of Execution or Punishment and provide sufficient Persons with Instruments and Materials to perform all manner of Punishments Executions and Sorts of Death upon every Prisoner who may be sentenced, and will also bury them in some convenient place."

In the year 1774 two Acts were passed (14 Geo. III, caps. 20 and 59) which were the commencement of Prison Reform in England. They owed their origin to the exertions of the noble John Howard.

The following extract appears to me so interesting that I reprint the whole of it. It is from *The State of the Prisons in England and Wales*. By John Howard. Published in 1777:—

“COUNTY GAOL at NORTHAMPTON.

GAOLER, *John Scofield*.

Salary, none: he pays the county £40 a year.

Fees, Debtors, } £0 : 15 : 4.  
Felons, }

Transports, If two £7 each; if more £6 : 16 : 6 each.

Licence, for Beer and Wine.

PRISONERS,

Allowance, Debtors, none.

Felons, two-pennyworth of bread a day  
(weight Jan. 1775, 1lb. 1½oz.).

Garnish. Debtors, £0 : 6 : 0,

Felons, 0 : 2 : 6.

Number of - - Debtors. Felons &c.

1773, Nov. 15, - 9 - - 8,

1774, April 5, - 6 - - 4,

1775, Jan. 2, - 8 - - 7,

1776, Jan. 5, - 7 - - 12.

CHAPLAIN, Rev. Mr. *Miller*.

Duty—Sunday, Tuesday, Thursday.

Salary, £40.

SURGEON, Mr. *Kerr*, } Salary, none.

APOTHECARY, Mr. *Breton* } They make a Bill.



## "NORTHAMPTON.

This Gaol is also the County Bridewell, (so called from the Prison in London which stood near St. Bridget's or St. Bride's Well,) but Petty Offenders are kept separate from Felons. Mr. Scofield has a Salary of £36 : 10 : 0 as Keeper. Two court-yards ; but that for Felons is too close. No straw. The County have lately built seven commodious rooms, for one Felon each ; yet there is still a dungeon eleven steps under ground, which might have been disused if they had doubled the number of the new rooms. There is ground enough in the Keeper's yard or garden.

The Chapel is the upper room in the Gaoler's house.—It is painful for Prisoners loaded with irons to go up and down the stairs. No Table of Fees."

Two years later (1779) Mr. Howard visited this prison again, he found the gaol clean, the prisoners working, and the gaoler attentive and humane. His salary at this time was £30 per annum. Twopence a day was allowed for meat to each of the felons. Mr. Howard also saw a proper table of fees, signed by Morgan the Clerk of the Peace, and confirmed by two Judges.

Some years after Howard went round the Prison again, and published the following account :—

## "COUNTY GAOL at NORTHAMPTON.

Gaoler's salary £200, out of which he is to give every prisoner three pints of small beer a day. In the walls of the felons' courts there are now apertures for air. The prison clean as usual. The new room for the sick is over the bridewell, with iron bedsteads

C

and proper bedding. The bread allowance to felons is a fourpenny loaf every other day (weight *3lb. 2oz.*). County convicts *2s. 6d.* a week.

1787, Oct. 27, Debtors *9.* Felons, &c. *20."*

The following is the Table of Fees, mentioned by Mr. Howard :—

*" Northamptonshire, to wit.*

At the General Quarter Sessions of the Peace—holden at Northampton, in and for the said County on Thursday—the Sixteenth Day of January, in the Seventeenth Year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lord George the Third—before the Reverend John Hill, Doctor of Laws; Ambrose Isted, Esq. Brook Bridges, and Charles Addington, Clerks; Justices of our said Lord the King, &c.

It is ordered, by this Court, that the following Rates and Fees be taken by the Keeper of his Majesty's Gaol for the said County; and no other:

	£	s.	d.
For the lodging of every prisoner for debt,			
in his house, <i>per week</i> ,		0	2 0
For the discharge of every such prisoner			
out of custody for debt,		0	13 4
Ditto to the turnkey, . . . . .		0	2 0
For the copy of every warrant, . . . . .		0	1 0
For signing a certificate, in order to obtain			
a <i>supersedeas</i> , . . . . .		0	2 0
For registering a declaration, . . . . .		0	1 0
For attending with every prisoner in order			
to give bail, or be otherwise discharged			
for debt, within the town of North-			
ampton. . . . .		0	2 0

And it is further ordered, that the above Table of Fees be laid before the Judges, at the next Assizes to be holden for the said county for their revisal and confirmation; and, if the same shall be so confirmed, that a copy thereof be hung up in some conspicuous part of the prison, and another copy in the grand-jury gallery.

By the Court,

*Morgan*, Clerk of the Peace.

We, the Judges of Assize for the County of Northampton, have reviewed, and do hereby confirm, the above-written Table of Fees. Given under our hands, at the Assizes holden at Northampton, the fourth day of March, 1777.

S. S. SMYTHE.

G. NARES."

The following is "A List of the Fees due to the Clerk of Assize of the Midland Circuit :—

	£	s.	d.
Acquitted and Discharge Fee in Murder .	1	7	8
The like in other Felons . . . . .	1	6	8
Discharge Fee according . . . . .	1	0	0
Discharge Fee or Proclamation . . . . .	13	4	"

The Gaol and the House of Correction continued in the same state as I have described them until about the year 1788; in that year large sums were raised to rebuild not only the County Gaol, but also the House of Correction. In the years 1792-93-94, the new Gaol and Bridewell were erected by Mr. Bruttingham, architect, upon Mr. Howard's plan. They cost about £16,000 building, and had accommodation for 140 criminals and 30 debtors. The keeper's house was in the centre of the prison, with a chapel on the first floor,

31ft. by 25ft., where service was performed to the whole of the prisoners every Sunday morning. Over the chapel there were three small infirmary rooms for the sick prisoners. The old Gaol (made out of Sir William Haselwood's house) was converted into a turnkey's lodge and a day-room for debtors on the ground floor, and the Grand Jury-room on the first floor—I should imagine much in the same place as at present. The prison had numerous good courtyards and seventy distinct sleeping cells.

The whole of this prison was built of the local yellow sandstone and had a good appearance.

The Rev. Edward Miller, Chaplain of the Gaol, made the following entries in his *Journal of Clerical Duty, Done at the County Gaol Chapel*:—

“ 1795

August

9. Number of Prisoners now in Gaol.

12 Men-Debtors.

6 Men-Felons.

2 Women & their 2 Children in Bridewell

—

20

1796

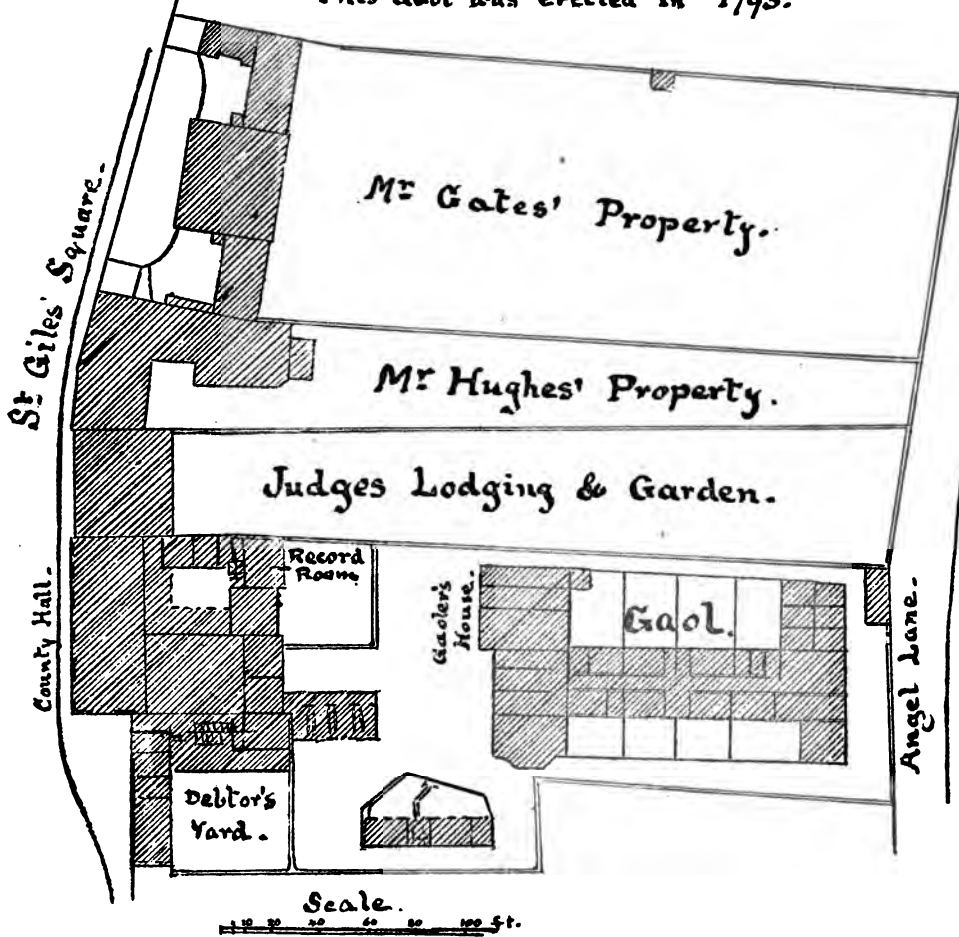
Decr.

28. The reason for there being no Prayers, was the severity of the Frost: the Alleys in the Gaol yard were as glib as Glass: and the Gaoler was affraid that the Prisoners in coming from their Cells to Chapel would slip down, and break their Legs; especially those loaded with Chains.

30. A fine Thaw!

Plan / of County Hall and Gaol

This Gool was erected in 1793.





1797

Mar.

The Assizes.

6. Gave the Prisoners who are to be Tried To-morrow, my Printed Letters how to behave themselves upon Trial, &c.
7. The Prisoners tried.  
A Man and a Woman condemned to be Hanged, but reprieved for Transportation before the Judge left Town.

1798

March

7. The General Fast.
12. The Judge Grose came into Town.
14. A heavy Calendar. 15 Prisoners to be tried.
15. The Assizes ended. No Executions.
26. St. Egerton Leigh wrote me a Request to let him come into Gaol to Exhort the Prisoners. My answer was in the Negative.

June

22. St. Egerton Leigh accosted me in the Street to-Day, and said to me, 'Mr. M. what is your objection to my going into the Gaol to speak to the poor souls of the immured Prisoners?' I replied, 'Because I think myself as capable of Instructing them as you are.' 'Oh!' quoth the pretended Saint, 'is that all.'"

In 1815 a deputation of the Court of the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of the City of London visited most of the prisons throughout England in order to collect information for the purpose of improving the City Gaols. They afterwards published a report. Mr. G. Dace, the clerk to the City Works, also published a separate report.

In these reports it is stated that when the Committee visited Northampton, there were only 26 male and 4 female criminal prisoners; and 8 male and 2 female debtors in the prison. The keeper, John Wright, had a salary of £200 per annum. He had 2 turnkeys, one of whom received a salary of £50 per annum. The whole was paid by the County. The Chaplain's salary was £50 a year, and strangers were admitted to the chapel to service. The surgeon received £26 a year, which sum included medicine for the prisoners. There was plenty of water, and good wash-houses and drying ground, &c. The prisoners were classed both before and after trial, and debtors kept by themselves. Criminal prisoners had a pound and a half of bread and gruel daily, potatoes and broth three times a week, and eight pennyworth of meat on Sunday. No indulgence was given to any prisoner by paying for it; and no provisions for the debtors were allowed by the County unless they were very poor. The debtors had a messenger, who received their commissions through an aperture in the wall. Debtors' friends were admitted from 9 a.m. until sunset. Each debtor, when he was discharged, paid the gaoler 13s. 4d., the sheriff 8s. 8d., and the turnkey 2s. In 1828 the lower part of the garden belonging to the Judges' Lodging was taken away, and a treadmill erected on the part so taken.

Time brought with it alterations in our Prison system, and in the year 1823 an Act was passed for the building of Gaols and Houses of Correction, and several other Acts were passed to require the Magistrates to enlarge the old Gaol. In the year 1840 the County took the matter in hand, and the Right Honble. John Charles Earl Spencer, and the Rev.



Edward Robert Butcher made a Presentment to Quarter Sessions that the Gaol and House of Correction were not large enough. The Magistrates then endeavoured to obtain the house and the bank on the west side of the old Gaol, which had been purchased in 1747 and used as the General Infirmary until 1793, in which year the Infirmary on the Billing Road was opened. Mr. H. B. Whitworth, the owner of the house and bank, requiring for them nearly £19,200, the County gave up all thoughts of purchasing such costly buildings.

The Magistrates then tried to obtain land on the other side of the Gaol, and ultimately bought Mr. Hughes' house and garden for the sum of £2100. The house adjoined the Judges' Lodgings on the east. The next house belonged to Mr. Gates, who asked for the house and garden £10,000. This was considered far beyond its value. The County offered £5000, and on this sum being refused the matter was referred to a jury, and at last the County acquired the property at the price of £7500. The late County Gaol was erected on portions of the gardens belonging to Mr. Hughes and Mr. Gates' houses, and it also extended behind the County Hall on the site of the old Gaol. A handsome entrance to the prison was erected on the site of Mr. Hughes' house. The Gaol was capable of containing 150 prisoners, and was in every respect a model building. The late Mr. Alexander Milne the elder was the architect, and the total cost of erecting the Prison was about £32,000.

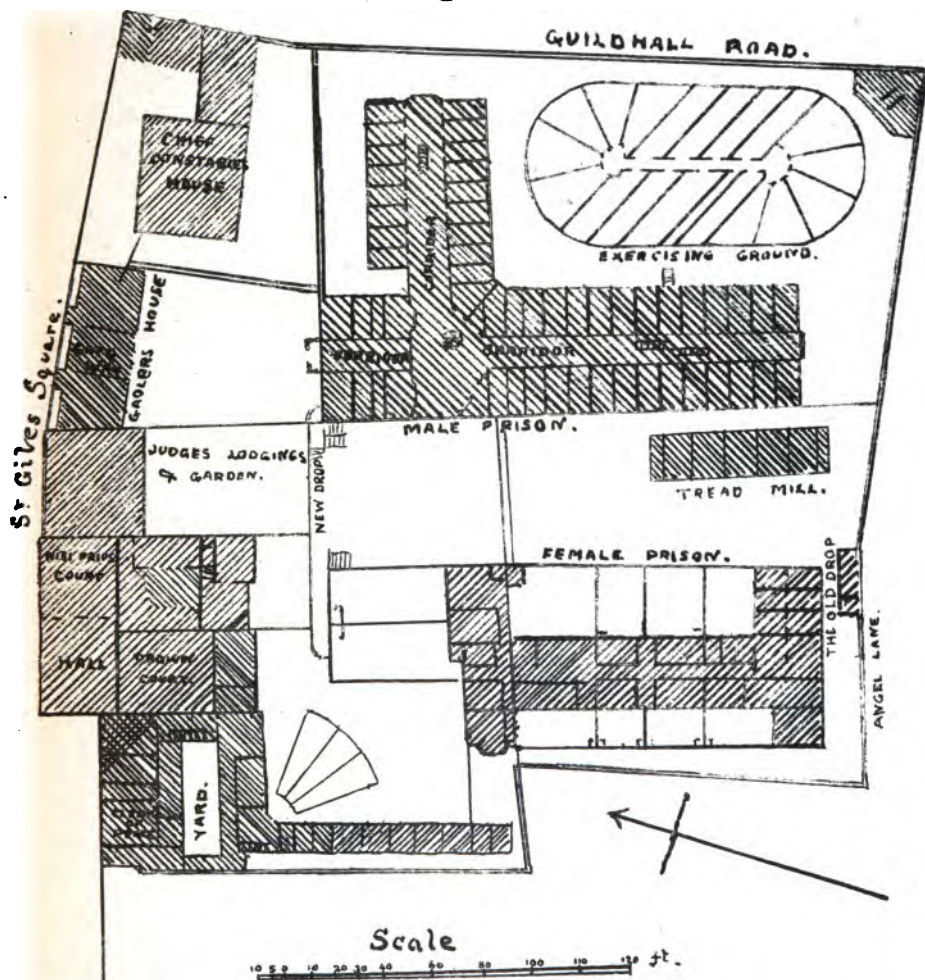
In 1865 a statute was passed to amend the Law as to Prisons, and from that time the distinct titles of Gaol and House of Correction were merged in the

appellative of Prison. In 1877 an Act was passed (40 and 41 Vic. c. 21) which came into operation the next year, by which all the prisons in England were vested in the Secretary of State instead of the Sheriff and the Magistrates. This Act terminated the obligation of the County or Borough to maintain prisons. It also gave the Secretary of State power to discontinue any Prison. In consequence of this Act and of there being two Gaols in Northampton, namely, the County and the Borough, on the 10th of December, 1879, the Secretary of State made an order that Her Majesty's Lower Prison at Northampton (the late County Gaol) should be discontinued on and after the 1st January, 1880; and by reason of this order the Prison Commissioners conveyed the dismantled prison on the 28th August, 1880, to the Clerk of the Peace for the use of the County. For which prison the County paid £9157 12s. *od.*

At the June Sessions of 1880 it was resolved to sell the late County Gaol, with the house occupied by the Governor of the Gaol, and the Chief Constable's house; and at an adjournment of the Sessions held on the 21st August, 1880, the Clerk of the Peace reported that Mr. J. Watkin had offered the sums of £5500 for the Gaol, £3000 for the gaoler's residence, and £3000 for the Chief Constable's house. This offer was accepted, and the whole of the properties were accordingly conveyed to him.

Mr. Watkin then sold the eastern part of the prison to the Town Council, who converted it into a Museum and Reading Room. The southern part of the building is now used as Barracks for the Salvation Army, who hold meetings there almost nightly; the

Ground Plan  
of the  
NORTHAMPTON COUNTY GAOL, COUNTY HALL,  
& JUDGES LODGINGS.



This Plan shows the County Property as it existed between  
the years 1826 & 1880.



gaoler's residence is used as a Tradesmens' Club; and the old portion of the prison (which was at one time used as a Militia Storehouse), is now changed into a row of dwelling houses, and dignified by the name of Angel Terrace.

### GOVERNORS OF THE GAOL.

William Hearne and Mary his wife were Keepers of the House of Correction from about 1678 till 1695, when the office was united to that of the Gaoler.

John Snart was the "wicked gaoler" in	1660 & 1664
Valentine Chadwick, in . . . . .	1671
Tho <sup>s</sup> . Chadwick was Gaoler from . . . . .	1681 to 1689
John King do. . . . .	1689 „ 1698
Thomas Chadwick Gaoler and Keeper of the House of Correction from . . . . .	1698 „ 1726
Michael Warwick . . . . .	1726 „ 1743
Joseph Warwick . . . . .	1743 „ 1744
Guy Warwick . . . . .	1744 „ 1752
William Warwick . . . . .	1752 „ 1767
Philip Warwick . . . . .	1767 „ 1773.
John Scofield . . . . .	1773 „ 1800
John Wright . . . . .	1800 „ 1818
John Grant the elder . . . . .	1818 „ 1845
John Grant the younger . . . . .	1845 „ 1857
Benjamin Rust . . . . .	1857 „ 1876
Charles E. Farquerson the last of the Governors . . . . .	1876 „ 1879

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# NORTHAMPTON.

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## HER MAJESTY'S PRISON.

**T**HIS building was formerly the Borough Gaol, it is situated on the Mounts, and was erected in 1845; and originally constructed to contain 94 male and 16 female prisoners. It is entirely constructed of brick, with white stone facings, and cost some £17,000; Mr. William Hull the elder being the architect.

In the year 1879 alterations were commenced, and since that time the accommodation has been greatly increased; the Prison at the present time having room for 181 male and 33 female prisoners. Land to the North and East has been purchased and enclosed by a new boundary wall, the old Water Works Reservoir having been converted into one of the finest prison exercise grounds in the country.

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## GOVERNORS OF THE PRISON.

George Arkesden from the opening of	
this Borough Gaol in . . . .	1845 to 1878
John Howe from . . . .	1878

## COUNTY GAOLS & BRIDEWELLS.

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**U**NTIL recently the following Gaols and Bridewells existed in the County. There may have been others, but if so I cannot find any trace of them. Much of the information that follows is gathered from Mr. Howard's writings.

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### BRACKLEY GAOL.

This room was also called the Dungeon, it was four feet square, under the stair-case of the Town Hall. There was an oval aperture in the door eight inches by six. The Constable was also Gaoler.

In October, 1779, there was no court, no water, and I am glad to say no prisoners there. This gaol was used until about the year 1851.

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### DAVENTRY GAOL.

In January, 1776, this gaol was in the same condition as the Brackley one, as far as regards the Court-yard, water, and prisoners.

## KETTERING BRIDEWELL.

At the January Sessions, 1747, it was ordered that a House of Correction should be built in Hog Leys. Joseph Warden, Victualler, was appointed Keeper, with a Salary of £12 a-year and £13 for rent. This Bridewell was the back court of the Keeper's public house; there was a room for men  $18\frac{1}{2}$  feet by  $16\frac{1}{2}$  feet; down three steps a lodging room, 8 feet by  $5\frac{1}{2}$  feet, with an aperture in the door 15 in. by 11 in. Court  $19\frac{1}{2}$  feet square. For women a separate court, and a room about the same size as the men's day room: clay floors: windows close glazed, no water.

In 1842 there were small Lockups in School Lane, and a little later a Lockup in Workhouse Lane.

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## NORTHAMPTON TOWN GAOL.

In the year 1779 there was a court-yard four feet wide with two rooms for felons, and one for debtors. The felon's allowance was twopence a day. The Gaoler was bailiff and sheriff's officer, he had no salary, but he had to pay £3 for rent. Fees 13s. 4d. In November, 1779, there was one debtor and one deserter in this Borough Gaol, which was situated in Fish Lane, where the present Police Station now stands. George Arkesden was Gaoler from 1842 until this Gaol was discontinued.

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## OUNDLE BRIDEWELL.

There were several rooms in a ruinous house belonging to the County at Oundle. There was no possibility of keeping prisoners, but in heavy irons;



the allowance in bread, &c., was 6*d.* a day. In 1742 John Southwell was appointed Keeper; and in 1772, George Ball, of Oundle, Fellmonger, was appointed Keeper, his salary was £12 a year and fees 3*s.* 6*d.* In September, 1779, there were no prisoners in this House of Correction, but in August, 1788, there was one prisoner.

This Bridewell was used until about the year 1842, and the old Stocks remained in the yard of the Police Station until 1877.

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### PETERBOROUGH.

The Soke or Liberty of Peterborough holds a Commission of Oyer and Terminer and Gaol Delivery, as well as a separate Commission of the Peace, of which the Marquis of Exeter is Lord Lieutenant, and Custos Rotulorum. His Lordship also formerly owned the Gaol.

The Sessions exercises power over all crime; indeed within the memory of men of the present generation prisoners have been sentenced to death, and the late Mr. Gates heard a man so sentenced.

### THE GAOL.

In 1774 there were two rooms for debtors, and down three steps a room called the gaol; in which is the condemned room. The Gaoler's salary was £12, which was augmented a few years later to £24. Fees 7*s.* 8*d.* The Gaoler paid Window Tax £1 5 6. In September, 1776, there were three debtors and one deserter in this Gaol.

## THE BRIDEWELL.

This place had a large workshop on the ground floor with one room for men and another for women; upstairs two rooms or hemp-warehouses; the Keeper was a hempdresser. There was a very small courtyard, not secure, and the prisoners were always kept within doors, no water. The Keeper's salary was £8. Fees 3s. 6d. In September, 1776, there was one prisoner in this Bridewell, which was held by the Feoffees of the Town Estates, it was described in the Deeds as "the old Moot Hall usually called the House of Correction, and used as such."

In the year 1839, an Act of Parliament was passed for the construction of a new Gaol in Peterborough; this Act mentioned that — "Whereas the present Common Gaol in and for the Liberty or Soke of Peterborough, and hundred of Nassaburgh, in the County of Northampton, situate in the Minster Yard; and the present House of Correction for said Liberty, or Soke, and Hundred, situate in or adjoining to Cumbergate Street, are distinct buildings of great antiquity, inconveniently situated, and too small, and it was expedient for a new Gaol and House of Correction to be consolidated in the same building."

This was accordingly done, and the new Prison was erected in 1842, at a cost of £10,000. This Building was shortly afterwards converted into a Police Station.

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THE COUNTY HALL.

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## THE COUNTY HALL.

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**T**HE County does not seem to have been possessed of a Shire House in the Town of Northampton previous to the Great Fire in 1675, and I find that before this time the Assizes were always held at the Northampton Castle. The General Quarter Sessions of the Peace were almost always held at the Castle; and Adjourned Sessions were also held at Kettering, at the Talbot Inn, Oundle, and different County Houses, in 1689 at John Bayly's Coffee-house in Northampton, and as late as the year 1723 the Adjourned Sessions were held at Saunders' Coffee-house and Hill's Coffee-house in Northampton; also at the George Inn, and a little later at Maidwell.

In the Calendar of State Papers the letter dated 13 July, 1662, from Sir Edward Nicholas to the Earls of Exeter and Westmoreland, Lord Lieutenants of Northamptonshire, states, that the King consented that the stone of the walls of Northampton should be assigned to any one who would take it away. It also states that "As for y<sup>e</sup> Castle-yard his Mat<sup>y</sup>. is content y<sup>e</sup> so much of it should remaine as is necessary for y<sup>e</sup> shelter of y<sup>e</sup> justices in y<sup>e</sup> Bench as your Lōps desire." The last recorded trial at the Castle with

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which I am acquainted was held in October, 1665. It appears that before the year 1670, the part of the Castle which was used for the Assizes and Sessions had become ruinous, and the Town being anxious to have the Shire House in the Borough, offered to pay £400 towards the erection of the Shire House in case it was built in the Town, and on 2nd January, 1670, the Mayor of Northampton wrote to Sir Justinian Isham, M.P.: "Thanks of Mayor and Corporation for multiplied and signal favours to this Corporation for getting Assize and Sessions to sit in the body of this town.

E<sup>d</sup>. Collis, Mayor.

J. Howes.

R. Massingberd.

R. Handy."

It also appears from the Town Records of 6th January, 1670, that the Corporation ordered "That a Shedd be built of Bord & Timber at the Chamber Charge for the Judges to sitt in next Assizes; & to be built in some convenient place w<sup>th</sup>in the body of this Towne for that purpose."

It is stated in the Minutes of Michaelmas Sessions, 1670:—

"Md That it is this day refered by order of Co<sup>r</sup> to W<sup>m</sup>. Pargiter W<sup>m</sup>. Buckby Sam. Clarke & ffr. Morgan, Esq<sup>r</sup>. or either of them to draw vp a Bill for laying a Taxe upon y<sup>e</sup> whole County of Northton & all priviledged places therein not exceeding on & twenty hundred pounds for the building vp of a Sessions-house in some convenient place in the Towne of Northton wherein they are to take care for the exempting of a peece of ground whereupon the said

sessions-house shall be built out of y<sup>e</sup> Corporation of Northton & also y<sup>t</sup> no arrest shall during Sessions-tyme by any processe whatsoever from y<sup>e</sup> Mayor or Bayliffs of y<sup>e</sup> Corporation or others bee made or executed And after they have drawne the same & taken further prudent care therein as is befitting then they are desired to shew the same to Mr. Justinian Rainsford & some other gentleman who is of the Com of y<sup>e</sup> peace for their appbasion & to make such additions alterations & amendm<sup>ts</sup> as they shall think requisite therein That afterward it may be deliver<sup>d</sup> to y<sup>e</sup> p<sup>re</sup>snt K<sup>ty</sup>. of the Shire of the County & Burghesses of y<sup>e</sup> Borrough towns therein that soe the same may be turned into an Act The Peers of this Realme inhabiting within this County & y<sup>e</sup> s<sup>d</sup>. K<sup>ty</sup>. & Burghesses being desird by sd Bench to assist & concurre in getting y<sup>e</sup> same to be speedily passed into an Act."

Order of Sessions made Epiphany, 1670.

"Whereas in pursuance of an Order of this Co<sup>ty</sup>. made the last Sessions a bill (as we are informed) hath been p<sup>re</sup>sented & read in ye hono<sup>ble</sup>. house of Comons for ye erecting of an house for ye Assizes & Sessions for this County in ye towne of Northton And whereas wee take notice by an acknowledgm<sup>t</sup>. made here in Co<sup>ty</sup>, that by ye p<sup>re</sup>sent. of ye Corporacon of Northton some alteracons of ye sd bill have been or will be endeavoured to ye p<sup>re</sup>judice of ye sd County And in case they shall finde such alteracons to be much pressed & stood vpon That then they take care the said bill be layd aside & not perded [persisted] in And in ye last place the Clerke of ye peace is to give speedy notice of this o<sup>r</sup> order to o<sup>r</sup>

K<sup>ts</sup>. of ye shire by sending one to each of y<sup>m</sup> to ye end they may proceed accordingly And ye bench returnes you thanks for your care herein on behalf of ye country.”

Bridges mentions in his History that the Sessions were removed from the Castle to the Market Cross in the year 1670.

In the Record of Quarter Sessions for the year 1671 it was ordered that the materials of the houses for the Assizes and Sessions at the Castle be applied towards the building of the two houses for Assizes and Sessions, and that His Majesty be petitioned for materials to build the same.

It was also ordered that the Clergy of the County should pay for Glebe and Tithe towards the building of this Sessions-house.

About this time, however, it does not appear that any Act of Parliament was obtained for building the County Hall, for the reason mentioned above.

In 1673 an entry occurs in the County Treasurer's accounts of his having paid

£      s.      d.

“To y<sup>e</sup> Clerke of y<sup>e</sup> Peace procureing  
an order to resiste a fine imposed  
vpon the County for not pviding  
a convenient Session house .      . 02   05   00”

and the next year a payment was made to the Gaoler for repairing the Sessions-house of over two pounds. This must have been the temporary one, which was made of wood, as directed by the Borough after the Castle was destroyed, and to which Boarded House the Sessions were adjourned in 1673.



The following entries appear in the Records of the Town Council :—

“4th April, 1672. It is ordered that there be an Assessm<sup>t</sup>. upon all Inhabitants of this towne for the raying of the sume of One hundred pounds for the building of an Assize & Sessions howse And that such Ground be allowed & granted to the Gentry of the County of Northton for the building of the same as the Towne have of their owne.”

“9th May, 1672. Ord<sup>d</sup> alsoe that the hundred Pounds graunted the last assembly for the building of an Assize & Sessions House in this town for the County of Northton be assessed by Mr. Robert Ivory, Mr. William Wallis, and John Labram for the Cheq<sup>r</sup>. Ward, Mr. Thomas Whithorne and Daniel Singleton for the South W<sup>d</sup> Mr. Richard Ebrall and Bartle Manninge for the West, Mr. John Woolston and Mr. Edward Parker for the North, Mr. Thomas Judkins & Matthias Dawes for the East Ward.”

“8th November, 1675. Ordered that an hundred pounds be Borrowed of the Treasurer for the charitable money of Northton for the rebuilding of Sessions-howse, the old howse being burnt; & for doeing other necessary things about this towne; and that the comon Seall be affixed to an Instrument for securing the same money to the s<sup>d</sup> Treasurer.”

In searching the “Accounts of the Mayors of Northampton,” which commence in 1676, I could not find any entry of the payment of the £100, and there is no mention of the receipt of the money in the County Treasurer’s accounts about this time. It seems probable that, after the Fire, the town found itself so embarrassed that it could not pay anything to

the County. Indeed, in 1687 there is a payment by the County to Mr. John Clarke, Mercer, of Northampton (who I suppose was the same John Clarke who was Mayor of the town in 1691-2), on Justices Order, of £60, to be disposed of as Justices should in Sessions think fit, and this money I think was for the use of the town.

The Chamberlain's accounts commence in 1675. I have examined these papers until the year 1740, without finding any reference to the County Hall.

In 1675 (just before the Great Fire) a memorial was sent to the King from the Magistrates to the effect that the Castle (where the Assizes were usually held) was ruinous, and praying His Majesty to give them the same and the old stone for the purpose of erecting a County Hall and Judges' Lodgings on the site of the Castle. However nothing seems to have been done then. At the October Sessions, 1675, an Order of Court was made that as an encouragement for the rebuilding of the "miserable town," and as an ornament to the same it was decided to build the County Hall within the town. There was

£   s.   d.

"pd Mr. Bromwich vpon order to psente  
persons that have demolished y<sup>e</sup> Castle   05   00   00"

The following is an extract from *The State of Northampton from the beginning of the Fire, Sept. 20th 1675. to Nov. 5th. Represented in a Letter to a Friend in London.* By a County Minister:—

"And although the Fire spoiled and consumed many Goods (it spared neither Cross nor Pump, nor Timber drawn into the Market-place for the Sessions-House); yet what the Fire spared in that and other Places,

*cruel Thieves*, that come in to spoil the Spoiled, were more Merciless than a merciless Fire."

It therefore appears that before the Great Fire in 1675 a part of the money needed for the building of the new Court House was collected, and that the timber for such building had also been procured, and was lying on the Market Square in Northampton.

After the Great Fire the Parliament begun at Westminster in 1661 was held by Prorogation on the 13th day of October, 1675, and it is somewhat remarkable that the only Statute passed in that year was the Act for Re-building the Town of Northampton, but no reference is made in the Act to the Gaol, the House of Correction, or the new Shire House.

With the Borough muniments there is a book containing a record of all the alterations and improvements in the Town which were effected, entitled :—*The Book of Inrolments of the Decrees of the Court of Judicature*, but there is no mention of the building of the Sessions-House.

The following is from *The Accompts of Mr. John ffrend, Major of Northampton, from the Feast of St. Michael, 1676.*

£   s.   d.

" 16 Jan. 76. Spent at Swann upon the  
Com<sup>ms</sup>. meeting about the Church  
& Towne concerns and Sess<sup>n</sup>-house      0   11   6"

This is the only mention I find in the Borough Accounts of the Sessions-House.

In the same year, 1676, an order of the Sessions to the following effect was made: "That the Gentlemen to whom the Building of Houses for keeping the

Assizes and Sessions is referred, doe Build the said Houses upon the Ground belonging to the Gaol lately burnt down & desires S<sup>r</sup>. Roger Norwich Barr<sup>t</sup>. would be pleased to joyne with them & further them with his assistance in the building of the same." This Gaol was on the site of the old Bell Inn.

The County Hall must have been commenced at once, because the whole building was finished in 1678, as evidenced by the date on the fine old leaden water-pipes outside the Hall. In September, 1690, Mr. Pierce, preached in the Sessions-House to the Prisoners, Debtors, and a great concourse of people, "there being a vault to convey the Prisoners from the Prison to the Bar up a trap door." The Title of this Sermon is given on page 10.

The payments for building the County Hall extended over many years. The following are some of the most interesting items:—

	£	s.	d.
Mr. Edward Edwards, Surveyor . . .	100	0	0
Mr. John Sims, the Joiner, for Wainscoting the Sessions-House and Materials, about . . . . .	290	0	0
Mr. William Hawkes, for Timber . . .	18	0	0
William Sharpe, Carpenter . . . . .	110	0	0
Charley Cooke and Henry Harris, Black- smiths . . . . .	30	0	0
Mr. Rainsford (the Magistrate) towards the Sessions-House . . . . .	300	0	0
Timothy Clarke and Wm. Sharpe, a gratuity for the paines they took . .	5	0	0
Wm. Sharpe, Scaffolding for Plasterer .	8	0	0
To the Glaziers . . . . .	5	0	0

The Treasurer's Accounts for the Western Division of the County are the only ones of this date now in existence, and I think all the items in the accounts may fairly be doubled, which would give £1,800 or £2,000 as the total cost of the building, but this, of course, is only approximate.

The very beautiful ceilings in the two courts were modelled by Mr. Edward Goudge, a plasterer. He must have been an artist with a great love for his work. He received the sum of £150 only for the four years which it took to complete the designs. It is, however, pleasant to know that the Magistrates thanked him for doing the work "to the great likeing and satisfaction of this Court of Quarter Sessions," and also gave him £5 as a gratuity. The ceiling was finished and the scaffolding removed in 1688.

Bridges, in his History of the County, published in 1791, says that "the Sessions-house is a very elegant structure and curiously ornamented. It consists of two sides of a square, and resembles the Roman capital letter L; the Courts of Justice are placed at each end, and if sitting at the same time give no interruption to each other. The plan of it was designed by Sir Roger Norwich."

This statement that the Courts gave no interruption to each other may be doubted, because, a few years after Bridges wrote, the Criminal Court was divided from the Central Hall. The Nisi Prius Court was however not divided from the Central Hall until quite recently, and those now living can remember the Judge sitting in the Nisi Prius Court, and being so much disturbed by the noise in the lower part of the

Court, that he severely reprehended the Sheriff for not keeping better order. Although Bridges ascribes the design to Sir Roger Norwich, the following extract from a letter written by the Rev. R. Richardson, Vicar of Brixworth, to Sir Thomas Isham, gives Mr. Jones the credit of the work.

"2 Sept<sup>r</sup>. 1678. Henry Jones, lately an architect at Northampton, where he built the Sessions House and also All Saints, with its Balausters on the steeple and a large cupola, has built a beautiful house at Haselbeach—he wishes for your picture."

The Rev. Richardson, writing from Northampton on the 15th June, 1678, mentioned that:—

"All things are most splendid here, especially the Sessions-house, Uncellino (or after the style of Cellini), and the Church, with his ballaustres on the steeple and a large cupola."

It was part of the duty of the Gaoler to provide cushions and carpets for the Bench—I suppose for the Assizes and Sessions; and for this service he was allowed a salary of £3 a year; but in the year 1699 I find the following entry in the Treasurer's Accounts:—

"Ordered that the County pay for noe more bread for ye King's condemned prisoners nor for ye cushions in ye Sessions House, his Magt<sup>r</sup> paying for the same but only for candles and other little things one pound."

The next entry shows that the County acquired some cushions of their own:—

"Paid Sir Robert Haselrige for ye    £    s.    d.  
two velvet cushions by Order of  
Sessions ffor ye Sessions House    014    18    06"

The following entry appears in the Record of Quarter Sessions :—

“Trin. 1689.

It is ordered as a Memorand and acknowledgement of the great peace happiness Liberty Lawes and Religion this Nation enjoyes under the Blessed Government of Our Sovereigne Lord and Lady William and Mary King and Queen of England, &c. &c. That the pictures of our said Sovereignes from head to foot be purchased and hung vpp in the Sessions House for the said County in the Towne of Northton to adorne the same and that it be referred to S<sup>r</sup>. Thomas Samwell, Baronet, John Parkhurst and francis Morgan Esq<sup>re</sup>. to choose and agree with one of the eminentest and best painters of the nation to draw the same with as much Expedicon as may be for the price of them as also for frames fitting and suitable for the same and to hang or cause them to be hung vpp in the said Sessions House in the most convenient place as they shall thinke fitting And it is further hereby ordered that the said francis Morgan being one of the Treasurers for the said County do and shall pay discharge and expend all such summes of money as shall be laid out in and vpon the accounts aforesaid out of the Countreyes moneys in his handes and what moneys he shall so lay out and expend shall hereby be allowed in his accounts.”

Accordingly Mr. William Claret was commissioned to paint the portraits of King William III. and Queen Mary, and they now hang in the Nisi Prius Court; both the pictures are signed “W. P. Claret pinxit” but not dated.

The following are the entries relating to them in the County Treasurer's Account Book:—

" 1690.	£	s.	d.
To Mr. Clarett for ye King and Queens pictures . . . . .	80	00	00
For ye frames to ye packeing &c . . . . .	28	00	00
To Dar: Thomas for Ironworke for y <sup>m</sup> . . . . .	00	12	00
Rebursing ye money to Mr. Clarett . . . . .	00	04	06
To ye Frame maker . . . . .	00	01	06
To be pd out of y <sup>m</sup> to y <sup>e</sup> Car. brought ye pictures down . . . . .	02	13	06
	<hr/>		
	£111	11	06"

This William Claret was an English portrait painter, he was a scholar of Sir Peter Lely and died in 1706.

Portraits of Queen Ann, King George I., and George II. now hang in the Hall; they are not signed, and the following are the only references I can find to these pictures:—

In the Record Book of the Michaelmas Sessions, held in the second year of George I.:—

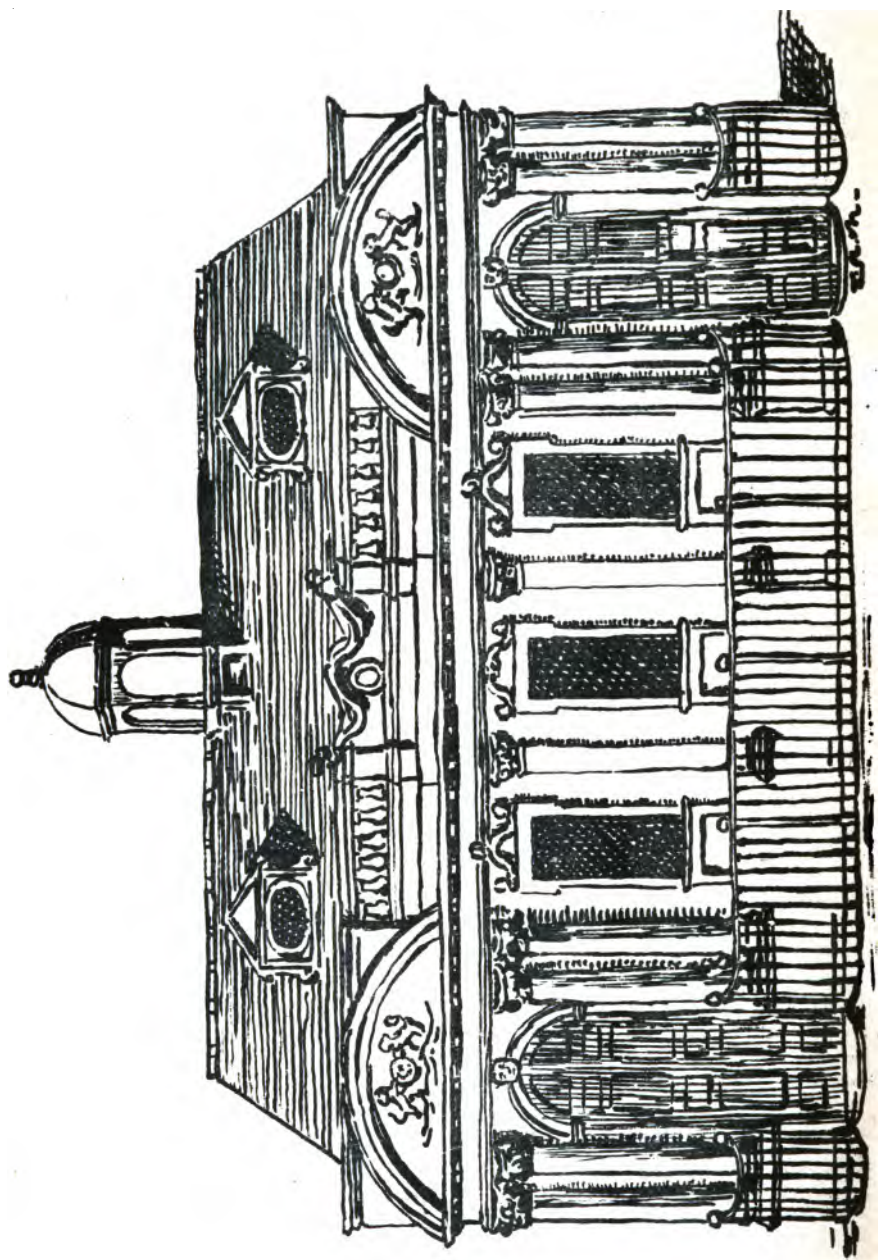
"It was ordered that Mr. Serj<sup>t</sup>. Hanbury, S<sup>r</sup> Thomas Samwell, S<sup>r</sup>. John Humble, and J. Ekins Esq. gete King George's picture drawn by a good hand and be hung up in the Sessions House at ye charge of ye County not exceeding 50l. for ye same."

The picture was accordingly bought, and the County paid Mr. J. Ekins £60 for the same.

In all the Histories of Northampton it is recorded, that at the beginning of the present century and previous to the alterations in the Courts being made,







**THE COUNTY HALL . 1746.**

on the bar in the Criminal Court, at which the culprit was placed during his trial, was a piece of iron machinery 'resembling a handcuff, used for inflicting the punishment of "burning the hand." On the instrument was the motto "Come not here again." This burning in the hand was a curious relic of the ancient times and method of punishment. As long ago as 1487 I find there was an Act passed that men convicted of Felony, and allowed benefit of Clergy, were to be branded on the left thumb with the letter M for murder, and the letter T for other offences, and this was to be done by the Gaoler in open Court. This benefit of Clergy was originally the privilege that was allowed to a Clerk in Orders, when prosecuted in the Civil Court, of being discharged and handed over to the Ecclesiastical Court, where he was allowed to clear himself on oath. This was soon extended to all who could read; but by this Act of 4 Hen. VII., any layman claiming this benefit was to be burned in the hand as described above, in order to prevent any person from claiming benefit of Clergy more than once.

In 1623 this was extended to women who were convicted of taking goods above the value of twelve pence. They were also to be branded in open Court on the left thumb with a hot burning iron having the letter "T" on it. These Acts were repealed in 1827 (7 & 8 Geo. IV. c. 28.)

The sketch of the County Hall is from a Map of Northampton, published in 1746, by Messrs. Noble & Butlin. It is mentioned on the Map that the Cupola having got out of repair it was taken down; the windows in the roof were also taken away, I suppose to avoid the expense of repairing them.

*The Diary of Mr. Miller*, the Chaplain to the Gaol, contains the following entries :—

“ 1796

Jan

14 The Quarter Sessions

15 Exhibited this Journal to the Justices in the Record Room, Mr. Dickins Chairman. Had their thanks for my punctuality.

1798

Oct<sup>r</sup>.

5 The Concourse of Freeholders was so Great at the County Hall to Day to chuse a Verdurer for Rockingham Forest that I had no opportunity of Exhibiting my Journal to the Justices as usual. Col. Maunsel one of our Justices was appointed Verdurer in the Room of Mr. Thursby deceased. 2 candidates, Major Samwel, and Edw<sup>d</sup>. Bouverie Esqr Declined it, in favour of Col. Maunsel.”

In 1769 an Act was passed to enable Justices of the Peace, on a presentment of the Grand Jury at the Assizes or Great Sessions of the bad state of any Shire House, to repair the same and levy money on the Hundreds and Parishes of the County. Accordingly, on the 5<sup>th</sup> September, 1812, an agreement was made between Thomas S. W. Samwell, Esq<sup>r</sup>., and the Rev<sup>d</sup>. John Seagrave, Clerk, two Justices of the Peace, and Richard Davies of Harleston, Builder, that Mr. Davies, for the sum of £2,070, should make certain improvements in the County Hall, by dividing the Criminal Court from the Hall and making a Gallery in the Court. A passage round the Record Court was also covered in, and a Robing-room for the Judges and several

other rooms were built ; the contract for the alterations was greatly exceeded, and about £3,900 was paid to Mr. Davis altogether.

The Record Room is situated behind the Court. It seems to have been built about the time of Queen Anne, and there is a beautiful chimney-piece of moulded stucco work between the two windows in the Queen Anne style. At the end of the last century the Quarter Sessions were generally held in this room. There is another old room adjoining the Record Room with corner mantel-piece.

In the year 1871 the whole of the Record Court was roofed in and converted into a Magistrates' Room, at a cost of £350. The new Committee Room was constructed behind the Clerk of the Peace's Office, on the site of the County Treasurer's Office, in 1881 ; at the same time an additional Muniment Room was provided, and the whole improved and rendered fire-proof. The new Police Offices were also built at the same time.

# CLERKS OF THE PEACE FOR THE COUNTY OF NORTHAMPTON.

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R	Guy in	.	.	.	1659	
William Ireland in	.	.	.	.	1670	
Joseph Duckett	.	.	from	1688?	to	1692?
Henry Horton	.	.	.	.	1692?	„ 1738
Thomas Smith	.	.	.	.	1738	„ 1749
Arthur Brooke	.	.	.	.	1749	„ 1754
Timothy Rogers	.	.	.	.	1754	„ 1769
Charles Morgan	.	.	.	.	1769	„ 1788
Christopher Smyth.	.	.	.	.	1788	„ 1823
Charles Markham	.	.	.	.	1823	„ 1846
Henry Philip Markham	.	.	.	.	1846	„

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THE JUDGES' LODGINGS.

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## THE JUDGES' LODGINGS.

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**T**HERE is no record of any house at Northampton being used for the reception of his Majesty's Judges previous to the present century, and I do not know whether the Judges went to one of the Inns, or whether they stayed at one of the County Houses in the Town.

The tradition about the Judges, which I give for what it is worth, is that about sixty years ago there was a very large old-fashioned Bedstead at the George Inn, where the Brother Judges used to sleep together, after having dealt out justice, tempered with equity and mercy.

In the Hatton Collection of Parliamentary Papers, a letter from Briscoe to Lord Hatton, dated 15th Feb. 1682, mentions that the Assize being on the 29th, the Judges intended to ride the Circuit on horseback, and would be at Northampton on that day at 1 p.m.

At this time the Sheriff used to meet the Judges at the border of the County, towards London, and with his Under-Sheriff and Javelin Men on horseback conduct them in safety to Northampton. The Sheriff for Northamptonshire received the Judges from the Sheriff of the County from which they came, and by this means the Sheriffs were made responsible for the safety of the Judges. This practice was, however,

discontinued after the Country became more settled, and the matter was compromised by the Sheriff, Under-Sheriff, and Javelin Men going to Queen's Cross to meet the Judges, who used to post direct from London, receiving the Judges there and bringing them into the Town with due and proper respect. After the London and Birmingham Railway was opened in 1838, the Judges took advantage of the Line to Weedon, and drove from there to Northampton, the Sheriff meeting them, if that case, at Upton. This was continued until about the year 1845, when the Bridge Street Station was opened, after which time the Judges came by train, and the Station Master used to fit up one of the Waiting Rooms at the Station for the Judges, who were in the habit of robing before driving through the Town. At the present time the Judges come to the Castle Station, and are escorted to the Judges' Lodgings in a private manner.

In the year 1816 the County paid the Clerk of the Peace a Bill for obtaining the Act for providing a House for the Judges, £308 19s. *od.* This sum included all the Parliamentary Charges. And the next year "The Act for providing Accommodation for His Majesty's Justices at the Assizes for the County of Northampton," was passed.

The County Magistrates at once cast about to find a suitable House, and in the year 1819 they succeeded in purchasing the House adjoining the County Hall on the East, from Mr. John Steevenson, for the sum of £2,573, including the fixtures.

The total cost of purchasing and fitting up this House as a Lodging for the Judges was £3,844.

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TRACTS, 1655—1668.

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## TRACTS, 1655—1668.

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The following very curious Tracts were written in the County Gaol, Northampton. This List is taken from the *Bibliotheca Northantonensis*, in course of compilation, by Mr. John Taylor. Some of them, although not actually dated from the Gaol, were in all probability written from that place:—

The Discovery of the great enmity of the Serpent against the seed of the Woman, &c. London, 1655

From the common Gaol in Northampton the 25 day of the 4 month. 1655.

A True Testimony of what was done concerning the Servants of the Lord, at the Generall Assizes, holden at Northampton, the one and twentieth day of the fifth Month 1655. . . . With a true discovery of the persecution of Iohn Huchin, Michael Petteson, and Thomas Goodayre, who is imprisoned in Northampton, for the truths sake, &c. London, 1655

A True Discoverie of the Grovnd of the Imprisonment of Francis Ellington, Thomas Cocket, and Edward Ferman, whose outward dwellings is in Northamptonshire, who are cast into the Common Goale in Northampton, &c. London, 1655

The Mighty Day of The Lord is Coming, &c. London, 1656

From the common Gaol in Northampton, the 7 day of the 11 Month, 1655. Given forth by him the world knows by name, William Dewsbury, at the writing of this, prisoner for the word of God, and Testimony of Jesus Christ.

The Lambs Defence against Lyes and a True Testimony given concerning the Sufferings and Death of James Parnell, and the ground thereof, &c. London, 1656

*Dated*, From the Common Gaole in Northampton the 27th day of the 3d month, from them who of the world are scornfully called Quakers.

A Salutation from the Breathings of the Life, &c.

*London*

*Signed, Joseph Helling.*

*Dated, From the Common Gaole in Northampton, the 10 day of the  
2 Month, 1661.*

A Few Quæries to Simon Ford Priest at the Town of Northampton.

By Daniel Wills.

*London*

*Signed, Daniel Wills.*

A Copy of these Queries were given into his own hand, by one of his hearers, on the 29. day of the sixth month, commonly called August, 1662, of which there hath been no answer.

Some words of unfeigned Love, to all the Tender-hearted People in the said Town of Northampton or elsewhere, &c.

*Signed,*

By one who was forcibly taken out of his own hired House, and by the Wills of the Magistrates of the said Town, was (contrary to any Law) by them committed to Prison; 'but they considering their unjust Action towards me, did the same day send for me from the Prison, who (in execution of their design) tendred me the Oath, and sent me back again, where I remain a present Sufferer for the Testimony of a pure conscience.

Daniel Wills.

A Salutation to the Little Flock, who do chuse Christ to be their Rock. By John Samm.

*London, 1663*

Given forth in the pure love & fear of God, in the County Gaole of Northampton, being twelve steps underground, the 17. day of the eight Moneth, 1663. Where I with sixteen more suffer for the testimony of Jesus.

A True and Faithful Testimony concerning John Samm, the Servant of the Lord, who finished his Course, by laying down his life in Northampton Goal, for the Truth of Jesus, the 26th of the 1st. Month, 1664, &c.

*London, 1664*

The Voice of the Innocent uttered forth: . . . . From the People of God called Quakers, who are sufferers in the County Goal of Northampton for Conscience sake.

*London, 1665*

A Signification from Israels God to Englands Rulers and Inhabitants, &c. T. O.

*1666*

*At end.*

Written in Northampton County Gaol the 3d of the 5th Mon. 1666, where I am a Prisoner with near 80. more of the people of the Lord at this day, who suffer for the Testimony of a pure Conscience, waiting for the Lord to plead our cause, and clear our innocency in the face of all our enemies.

Tho. Ollive.

Truth the strongest habitation for all the People of God, &c.

*Signed*, From the Prisoners in Northampton Gaol, who patiently suffer for Worshipping the Living God in Spirit and Truth. The first day of the fifth Moneth, 1666.

God's Judgments still Threatned against Thee, O England, for the great Abominations that have been, and are committed in Thee ;  
&c. 1668

*Signed*, Daniel Roe.

*Dated*, Northampton County-Gaol, in the Year, 1666.

## THE GAOL CHARITIES.

HALL'S CHARITY, created by John Hall, of Northampton, gentleman, who by his will dated the 28th April, 1821, bequeathed the sum of £100 to the County Justices to be invested and the Income to be applied in providing a dinner on Christmas Day to the Felons confined in the County Gaol. In pursuance of an Order made at the October Sessions, 1863, an application was made to the Charity Commissioners, who sanctioned the Income being applied for the benefit of prisoners leaving the County Gaol, or of Juvenile Offenders upon their being sent to a Reformatory School.

LADY LUCAN'S CHARITY was founded by the late Margaret, Countess Lucan, £100 being deposited in the Savings Bank, in October, 1818, by her request ; but this sum was withdrawn the following year and invested in the names of the Earl Spencer and Viscount Althorp. The late Lord Spencer was not aware of this wish of his aunt, the late Lady Lucan, until the year 1854 ; as soon as His Lordship discovered the error he transferred the £100, and interest thereon from Lady Lucan's death, to the County, to be paid to the poor debtors in Northampton Gaol, according to Lady Lucan's desire. In 1864 application was made by order of the Quarter Sessions to the Charity Commissioners who ordered that the Income should be applied for the relief of poor persons discharged from the County Gaol or children discharged from the Reformatory School at Tiffeld.

HUSSEY'S CHARITY was founded in 1713 by Rebecca Hussey, £768 12s. 11d. being invested, the Income to be applied in paying the debts and procuring the discharge of poor debtors committed to Prison by the County Court Judges. In 1871 the Charity Com-

missioners ordered that the Income should be appropriated for the support of any Industrial School, Local Hospital, or Dispensary in the County of Northampton.

The funds of all these Charities were at first applied towards the assistance of Prisoners leaving the Gaol, and towards the Northampton Infirmary and the Dispensary at Peterborough.

Under the Provisions of a late Act all the above-mentioned funds have been paid over to the Official Trustees of Charitable Funds, and the Charity Commissioners are now considering a scheme for the future application of the interest to arise from the funds so transferred to them.

## ADDENDA.

*THE State of the Prisons in England, Scotland, and Wales.* By James Neild. London, 1812, contains much information respecting the County and Town Gaols at Northampton, and the Gaol and Bridewell at Peterborough.

It is stated in this book that there were at the beginning of this century in the County Gaol, three day rooms for condemned prisoners, with a small court-yard to each; and that when locked up for the night the sentenced prisoner ascended by a ladder of fourteen steps, through a grated trap-door made in the ceiling of his day-room, up to his sleeping-cell. The dungeons mentioned on page 4 were then in existence, although they were not made use of.

Robert Roberts was gaoler of the Northampton Gaol in 1809; he was a Tobacco-pipe maker, he was also Sheriff's Officer, and Bellman of the Town; his house fronted the street. There was no court-yard, but the gaoler sometimes let the prisoners walk in his garden. On the 29th July, 1808, one debtor, two felons and one lunatic inhabited this Gaol.

William Millwood, a Sheriff's officer, was gaoler of the Peterborough Gaol in 1802, his salary was £30 per annum; and John White was keeper of the Peterborough Bridewell in 1802. In August, 1802, there were three prisoners in this Bridewell. Although Peterborough is a cathedral city there was no chaplain appointed for either the Gaol or Bridewell; if there were a Prisoner condemned to death in the Gaol, the Vicar of St. John the Baptist was required to attend him gratis.









